A

SPEECH

DELIVERED TO

THE ROYAL SOCIETY,

ON WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 30, 1780,

BEING THEIR ANNIVERSARY.

BY JOSEPH BANKS, ESQ.

PRESIDENT.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE COUNCIL.

THE Emotions of Gratitude inſpired by the very Place in which, by the Munificence of our Royal Patron, we are now for the firſt Time aſſembled, render it impoſſible for me to neglect the Opportunity which this Seaſon, when ye have been uſed to hear yourſelves addreſſed from the Chair, affords me, of offering my ſmall Tribute of Acknowledgement for a Benefit ſo eminently calculated to promote the Honour and Advancement of this Society.

Eſtabliſhed originally by the Munificence of a Royal Founder; foſtered and encouraged ſince that Time by every ſucceſſive Monarch who has ſwayed the Britiſh Sceptre, ye have ever proved yourſelves

worthy the Favor of your Royal Protectors. A NEWTON, who pruned his infant Wing under your Auſpices, when his maturer Flights ſoared to Worlds unmeaſurably diſtant, ſtill thought a Place among you an honorable Diſtinction. A NEWTON's immortal Labors, a BOYLE, a FLAMSTEAD, a HALLEY, a RAY, and many others, of whom I truſt it is needleſs to remind you, have made ample Returns for the Patronage of former Monarchs.

But bountiful as the Encouragement ye have received from former Patrons has ever been, the Favors which Science has, through your Interceſſion, received from his preſent Majeſty (whom GOD long preſerve!) have eminently outdone their moſt extenſive Ideas of Liberality. Ample Funds, by Him provided, have enabled you to reward Men of extenſive Knowledge and Ability, for ſpending whole Years in the Service of Science; obſerving twice the Tranſit of the Planet Venus over the Diſk of the Sun. At your Requeſt, the Publick defrayed the Expence of conveying

ing them to the moſt diſtant Parts of the Globe we inhabit, where the purpoſes of their Miſſion, ſo important to the Science of Aſtronomy, could beſt be fulfilled; while ye alone enjoy among your Fellow Academies the Reputation of having both ſent and rewarded them.

And more; thoſe very Donations were ſo liberally planned by that Attention to Science which has ever diſtinguiſhed His preſent Majeſty's Reign, and will for ever bear Teſtimony of his enlarged Mind, and Diſpoſition favorable to the Advancement of true Knowledge, that the Surplus alone enabled you, with his Royal Approbation, to inſtitute Experiments on the Attraction of Mountains, amidſt the barren and bleak Precipices of the Highlands of Scotland, which then, for the firſt Time, beheld Inſtruments of the niceſt Conſtruction tranſported to the Summits of their pathleſs Crags, and Men, uſed to other Habitations, voluntarily reſiding in temporary Huts, eager to expreſs a grateful Senſe of their Royal Patron's Liberality,

rality, by thus promoting to the utmoſt the Cauſe of Science, in which they were, under his Protection, embarked.

Gifts like theſe, unſolicited and unconditionally beſtowed, might have ſatisfied the Impulſes even of a Princely Munificence; but not ſo with our Royal Patron. Amply informed in every Branch of real Knowledge, He reſolved to beſtow a ſtill more diſtinguiſhed Mark of his Favor on Science which he loved, and in this his laſt beſt Gift has fulfilled his Royal Reſolution.

Such a Donation, ſo ſuited to our preſent proſperous and flouriſhing Condition under his Royal Patronage and Protection, is admirably calculated to increaſe the Reſpect, great as it is, which ye have ever received from the Learned of all Europe, placing you at once, in every Point of ſplendid Accommodation, as much above all Foreign Academies, as the Labors of your learned Predeceſſors had raiſed you above them in literary Reputation.

Let

Let then Gratitude to a Sovereign, from whom ye have received ſuch conſpicuous Encouragement, engage you, by an Application to a Promotion of the Sciences ye ſeverally poſſeſs, to deſerve a Continuance of his Royal Favor; to meaſure your future Exertions by the Standard of his princely Liberality; and thus ſhew the World, that ye ſtill are, as ye always have been, worthy the Patronage of your King!